Yamaha MusicCAST MCX-2000 Digital Audio Server

Review by Gene Della Sala of Audioholics.com

Introduction

I remember my first epiphany in digital playback convenience when I purchased a CD changer nearly 20 years ago. I was the cool kid on the block serving up labeled and categorized 6 disc magazine cartridges like they were going out of style. Pop one in, hit random, and you've got nearly 5 hours of music playback for up to a half dozen of your favorite artists. Little did I know, I was taking a mere baby step in music distribution. Welcome to the 21st century where science strives to make bigger and better tomatoes and the audio industry presses on to win over your hard earned dollars on the latest and greatest technological "must have" advancement.

Enter Yamaha's MusicCAST MCX-2000 Digital Audio Server. Yamaha's successor to the MCX-1000 previously reviewed by our own Clint DeBoer.

Some of the major added features of the MCX-2000 compared to its predecessor (MCX-1000) include:

- Larger Hard drive storage space (up to 160GB from 80GB)
- Integration of FM tuner and XM radio functionality
- Networking capability to play content from other computers' internal network

- Internet radio support
- Support for a larger client network with up to 15 simultaneous clients (5 wireless)

According to Yamaha, they wanted to incorporate many of the recommended features their customers were asking for such as a larger hard drive. With 160GB of storage, the MusicCAST MCX-2000 now has the capability of storing up to 60,000 songs. MusicCAST also now incorporates an FM tuner and has XM-ready features. They also added local area network (LAN) compatibility for use to stream and play content from other computers via an internal network (now you can use all those MP3s you downloaded and paid for). Finally, Yamaha added Internet radio support to offer users greater flexibility and almost endless choices for their streaming content.

Set-Up

Setting up the MCX-2000 couldn't be any easier. Gone is the hassle of running 3rd party software on a PC to copy CDs. Enter the era of convenience with a single front panel push button labeled "CD AUTO STORE". Finally, someone developed a music storage system that doesn't

Yamaha MusicCAST MCX-2000 back panel view

intimidate my wife. Her comments when uploading CDs to the MusicCAST were along the lines of *"That's it? Wow that's cool!"*

Before ripping CDs, some critical setup is in order. Let's take a look at the back panel to explore all of our connectivity options - which on this system are plentiful.

From left to right, we have the 802.11b antenna for wireless communications, composite and s-video connections, LAN (Ethernet/RJ45) connection, toslink I/O, analogue I/O, and RS-232. I would have liked to see provisioning for a digital COAX output in addition to the toslink connections. In my situation, I connected the MCX-2000 to my family room system (where most of the partying will be done) and also

Review Summary
Overall Rating: 4.5/5 Stars
Value Rating: 4.0/5 Stars
MSRP: $1999

Pros
- Unlimited configurability
- Endless entertainment
- Easy to setup and operate
- Unobtrusive
- Excellent sound quality
- Integrated XM/FM capability

Cons
- Doesn't prevent or warn of double CD copy
- Limited Internet radio functionality
- High dependency on using OSD to operate

Specifications

Yamaha MusicCAST MCX-2000 Digital Audio Server

MCX-2000 Server
- 160GB hard drive
- 1000 CDs in 320kbps MP3
- 200 CDs in PCM
- 8x/4x CD-R/RW drive
- Optical SPDIF I/O
- Analogue stereo I/O
- LCD Display / GUI
- FM, XM and Internet Radio
- RS232 communications for PC
- Gracenote CDDB
- OSD via S-video/composite
- PS/2 Port
- Headphone jack
- RS-232 Port
- IEEE 802.11b/g wireless
- 10/100 CAT-5 link
- IR remote
- Dimensions (W x H x D): 17-1/8" x 3-3/4" x 16-1/16"
- Weight: 14.5 lbs
- MSRP $1999

MCX-A10 Wireless Client
- 17wpc x 2 Digital Amp (optional)
- MP3 to all clients
- Linear PCM
- Retrieve music by Artist, Album, Genre, Playlist or all songs
- FM, XM Tuner Access
- LCD display
- Set time for Playback
- Sleep timer (120, 90, 60, 30 min)
- Wireless IEEE 802.11b network
- Speaker Output
- Line Out:
- Subwoofer Output
- OSD
- Dimensions (W x H x D): 8-1/4" x 8-1/4" x 3-1/8"
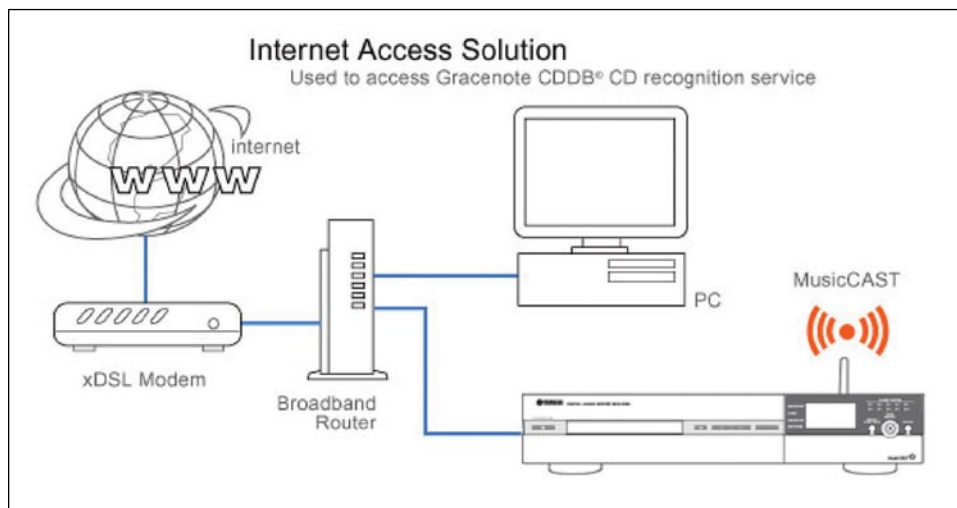- Weight: 6.6 lbs.
- MSRP $600

MCX-C15 Wired Client
- Similar to MCX-A10 but not wireless
- Mounts in standard dual gang Vboxes
- Dimensions (W x H x D): 4-1/2" x 4-1/2" x 4-1/8"
- MSRP: $399

MCX-CA15 Inwall Amplifier
- 17wpc x 2 Digital Amp
- input sensing
- analog I/O
- subwoofer output
- DC/IR pass thru
- Dimensions (W x H x D): 4-1/2" x 4-1/2" x 4-1/8"

MCX-SP10 Speakers
- Aesthetically Matching
- 17WPC
- Bass Reflex
- Wall Mountable
- Dimensions (W x H x D): 8.25" x 8.25" x 3.125"
- Weight: 2.6 lbs
- MSRP $120/pair

Internet Access Solution
Used to access Gracenote CDDB® CD recognition service

The first thing you will notice when ripping a CD into MusicCAST is that it almost instantly recognizes artist, title and song lists. This is no coincidence. The MCX-2000 is powered by Gracenote. Gracenote is an onboard (over 350k titles built in) and Internet-based database system (originally developed by volunteers, but then later licensed off) that contains informational content on virtually any CD you throw at it. The beauty of the MCX-2000 is it even works the album-labeling and categorizing magic with no Internet connection. You will still want to wire up the system to the Internet as I found several CDs that were not recognized until the MCX-2000 pulled the info from the Gracenote server online.

For more information about Gracenote, check out this Gracenote informational.

Wanna be slick? The MCX-2000 allows you to configure a Yamaha RS-232 equipped receiver automatically for use with the MusicCAST system. You can select the AV receiver input to which the MusicCAST will be connected, synchronize/slave power on/off of the receiver to the MCX-2000, change surround programs based on music genre, and even allow MusicCAST clients to broadcast audio from your receiver's tuner section. You can even set automatic playback and shutdown on each of your remote clients. How's that for custom configurability? It makes you wanna stay in the Yamaha family of products for your entire theater solution. Yes?

XM, FM, Internet Radio – Oh MY!

Did somebody say Radio? The MCX-2000 has that (FM at least) and much more. Manufacturers have made the push recently to integrate XM into their product lines. Yamaha is no different as they were one of the first to implement XM in their receivers and have now added it to the MCX-2000's arsenal of supported formats. Also new to the plate, is Internet radio. The MCX-2000 was preconfigured with

wanted to connect it to my main theater room upstairs but could only do it via analogue. Most users will opt for the wired or wireless clients, so my configuration scheme was a bit unusual as was trying to route the MCX-2000 as a source component through all of my audio systems rather than using its ancillary devices such as the MCX-A10 Wireless Digital Audio Terminal or the MCX-C15 Distributed Audio Controller.
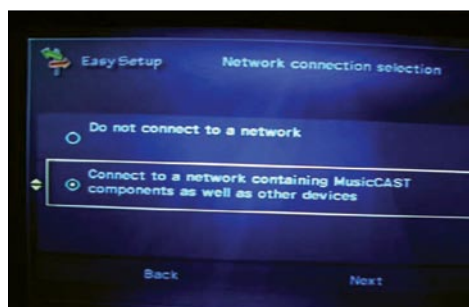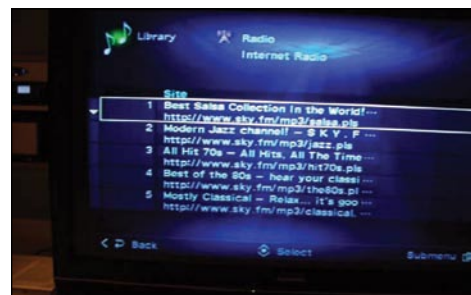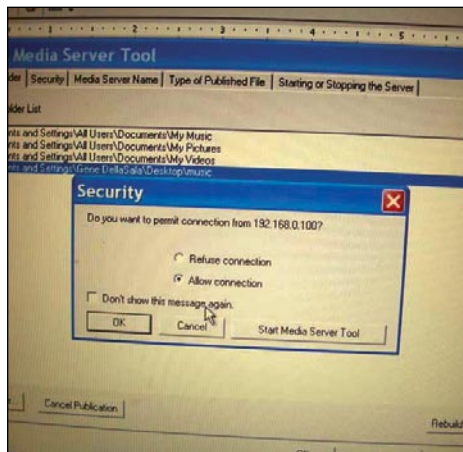
I connected the MCX-2000 to my router using a straight-thru Ethernet cable as seen in Figure 1 above. This is how you connect your MCX-2000 server to the Internet to take advantage of the Gracenote CDDB CD recognition service.

MusicCAST comes armed with a very good GUI (Graphical User Interface) which has the same look and feel of what is in their most recent receiver line up. The first thing you will want to do is engage the "Easy Setup" feature to configure your music server and wireless/wired clients.

Note
Don't skip this step as I found out the hard way that it was impossible to get Ethernet connectivity to run Internet radio without running through this. It's quick and painless, and very straightforward.

Next you want to select your encoding preferences in the Recording menu under Setup. I chose "PCM + MP3" that way I had the option of retaining the uncompromised PCM transfer for high quality recordings that I planned on doing critical listening to, or discarding it in favor of the MP3 compression scheme which frees up considerable hard drive space. I discarded PCM data for all of my party music, 80's rock recordings and most of the

wife's stuff since MP3 works just fine for her (she isn't as critical as I am with fidelity.) And yes, I did get permission with the wife for doing this, unlike some of you other folks out there that would attempt to pull a fast one on your significant other. I selected 256 kbps since it was virtually indistinguishable on the recordings I chose to implement compression on. According to the stats page on the MCX-2000, this freed up hundreds of recording hours for us, which was needed given our vast musical tastes and collection.

URLs for five Internet radio stations via sky. fm.com. Browse the Internet for more free radio services, enter the URLs into the MCX-2000, and presto, you've got free radio with no commercials or annoying DJs. With just a few clicks on the remote, I was soon listening to Salsa, Jazz, 70's and 80's hits absolutely free. Well, not free of compression though. Just like XM, Internet radio is highly compressed. While it may be unpalatable for audiophiles such as myself, I found it mildly entertaining provided that I didn't do any critical listening and just enjoyed it as background music. The Salsa channel was very cool indeed and opened me up to music I was unfamiliar with - inspiring me to spend more time in the Salsa section at the record store. I was a bit disappointed that this Internet radio didn't include song info such as title and artist like XM does (as do most of the PC Internet radio players),. I was a bit perplexed that the 70's and 80's channels were being broadcast in 128 kbps while the Salsa and Jazz channels were at a mere 96 kbps. I'd rather see, or more appropriately stated - hear - less compression on the more demanding music. XM was no different. Most of the channels suffered excessive compression (no fault on the MCX-2000, mind you), making the vocals sound metallic and causing instruments to lack any real punch. Again, if you aren't that critical, you'd likely be satisfied with the fidelity of these services. At the very minimum, they expand your listening palette to new music which you could then purchase.

Web Browser Editor Feature

Once you've got the MCX-2000 connected to your PC network, you can edit text information in your music archive using a standard web browser that is running on a computer within your network. Text information including artist name, album title, song title, playlist name, and Internet radio station names from the preset radio list are editable. This is a very useful feature when you need to edit a large amount of information. I'm guessing, though, that a majority of users will simply opt to plug in a computer keyboard via the front panel of the MCX-2000 to do quick edits of music files.

To access the MusicCAST music archive from a PC, simply type the MCX-2000's IP address into your browser.
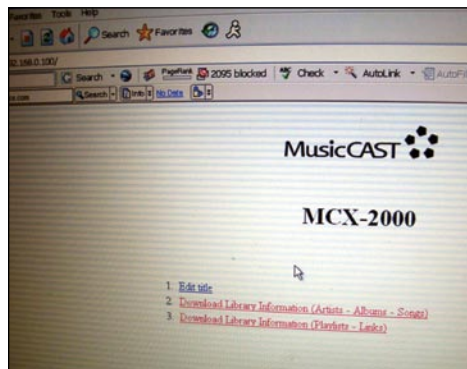

Streaming Music From Your PC

The original MusicCAST MCX-1000 lacked a critical feature for the more computer savvy customers which was found on other music server / HTPC solutions. This was the ability to stream audio from a networked PC. DiXiM Media Server software enables this ability. This software, after being installed on your PC, begins to operate immediately whenever the computer is booted up to publish the content contained in pre-specified folder(s). The content delivered to the MusicCAST MCX-2000 is processed specifically for delivering music over the PC network so that the original files aren't actually copied onto the MCX-2000 hard drive, but instead streamed from the linked PC on the network. Music streaming is available for mp3, m3u, wma and wave files.

" **The MCX-2000 didn't miss a note here. The PCM transfer sounded every bit as good as the original CD...**"

Gene Della Sala

After you load up the DiXiM software on your PC, the software will prompt you for a media server name. Of course I labeled mine as "Audioholics". It is important to label this, especially if you plan on streaming music from more than one PC on your network. You then have to permit access for the MCX-2000 to link up with your PC as seen in the picture to the right. On the MCX-2000 simply enter the Network menu and select the music server you want to stream music from. One cool thing about this software is it actually automatically identified most of my music folders on my PC that contained mp3 or other compatible music files. Additionally, on the MCX-2000 it actually retained the folder structure found on my PC where I had the bands all categorized. With this feature set in the MCX-2000 arsenal, the music delivery capabilities are virtually endless. I was loving the fact I could now rekindle some of the old progressive rock music I downloaded to my PC and haven't listened to on a stereo system in nearly a decade. I quickly navigated to my Peter Gabriel era Genesis folder and played cuts from Trespass, Nursery Cryme, and Foxtrot. Despite the fact it was playing a compressed mp3 file, I still loved Watcher of the Skies from Foxtrot, and listening to it in PLIIx Music Mode was simply awesome!

Music Management

After uploading a dozen or so CDs, I got all jazzed up at the MCX-2000's file management system. If only I could get it to organize my office so neatly and concisely. It correctly categorized my music by artist, and genre and even allowed me to perform related searches. Loading up some of my favorite Pat Metheny CDs and programming a compiled favorite song list for this artist, I soon was experience what die hard Metheny fans refer to as a Pat Attack. In fact, the MCX-2000 will allow you to program up to 1000 playlists and will furnish you with statistical playback habits. This is a handy feature to help you gauge just what music you and your family actually listen to on a regular basis.

My wife and I loaded up the MCX-2000 with popular party music and created groupings for Latin, Dance, 80's, etc in preparation for our upcoming house warming party. Our guests will be in for a pleasant surprise when they hear their favorite tunes uninterrupted. Most importantly, I don't have to worry about anyone fussing with the stereo gear (a big plus for me). I even setup hot keys on my Universal remote

so I could switch between party/dance favorites such as Carlos Vives to get our groove on, Steely Dan's Kid Charlemagne during cocktail hour, or Michael Franks' Burchfield Nines during dinnertime. There really are no configurability limits with MusicCAST allowing the listener(s) to choose exactly how they wish to playback and distribute music throughout the house.

Editorial Note of Caution about Uploading Music to the MCX-2000

Unfortunately the MCX-2000 isn't smart enough to realize when you install a particular CD more than one time to record it to the hard drive. Not knowing this, I accidentally popped in one of my favorite Marillion CDs Holiday's in Eden, on two separate occasions to upload it to the server and didn't realize I had a double copy of this disc until I decided to play a few tracks from it a day or two later. With the powerful database Gracenote on board, I was really surprised Yamaha didn't include a menu option to flag a user when this situation occurs to ensure no double copies of CDs are made, unnecessarily eating up valuable hard drive space.

CD Recording

You assembled the perfect playlists and loving the musical liberty they bring you. Now what about when you leave the home? No problem. You can simply burn a playlist on a recordable CD and you're good to go. Should you choose to take advantage of MP3 compression to fit more of your songs on the CD, make sure in advanced that your car CD player supports mp3 format otherwise you will have to stick with PCM and may have to shorten your play list to 74-80 minutes so it will fit on the CD.

Editorial Note on CD Copying

The Yamaha MusicCAST can only record to AUDIO CD-R/RWs. This is due to the fact that the MCX-2000 is classified as a Consumer Audio Device, making it subject to the rules associated with SCMS (Serial Copy Management System) an outdated, useless copy protection system developed back when the RIAA was concerned with this new CD technology resulting in a loss of revenue due to pirating and CD-R/RW drives were not prolific in desktop PCs.

More modern components of late have really started to skirt this limitation and we kind of wish Yamaha would also play it fast and loose, allowing the use of the less-expensive Data CDs.

Yamaha MusicCAST Wireless Client System

In case streaming music from your PC or serving up your entire music collection from one location to your home theater system isn't enough for you, Yamaha gives you the ability to stream music wirelessly from the MCX-2000 music server to 15 clients (up to 5 wirelessly) independently and simultaneously.

MCX-A10 Client

The wireless MCX-A10 main use is for locations where it makes it cost prohibited to run new Cat-5e cables. Older constructions and condos or apartments that a customer does not want to run cables to run multi-zone audio would opt for this solution.

LAN Port

The LAN port can be used in the event you want to forego the 802.11b wireless connection or desire a greater distance from the server than is possible.

Aux In Jack

You can connect an external analogue source here. This would be utilized if, for example, you were using the optional MusicCAST speakers and wanted to feed an MP3 player, computer or other audio device into the system as well.

Line Out L/R Jacks

Connect your MCX-A10 to a receiver using these 2Vrms line out jacks. These are full range line outputs.

Subwoofer Out Jack

If you are connecting the client to a receiver and speakers you can also send signal to a subwoofer via the SUBWOOFER line output. This is a variable full-range mono output, so you'll want to engage your sub's crossover and set it to the appropriate frequency for your system.

Video Out Jack

Connecting the video output of the MCX-A10 allows you to view the contents of the LCD screen on an external monitor. This is nice if you happen to be configuring the client into another home theater system (like a bedroom system) or you plan to be too far away to read the LCD display. Other than this, the LCD provides ample feedback for your configuration and playback needs.

Speaker Out Terminals

The spring-clip speaker terminals are rated to drive 17W x 2 into 4-ohms and the optional speakers are very nice looking and don't sound bad for the $120 price. No they aren't going to replace your $2k/pair tower theater speakers. However, they are well constructed and weigh about 2.5 pounds each - not too shabby when you figure in the fact that a decent set of computer speakers will run you this much. I'd much rather listen to these units. Like the MCX-A10 client, the speakers can also be wall-mounted or positioned side-by-side with the main unit for a clean, elegant look.

For more details on how the wireless client system functions and performs, check out our review of the original Yamaha MusicCAST MCX-1000.

Remote Control

There really isn't much to say about the remote for the MCX-2000 other than it is functional and intuitive for the most part. The circle buttons centralized in the remote are the ones most used to navigate through the MCX-2000's GUI interface. It has the ability to serve as a universal remote for situations where the MCX-2000 acts as the demarcation point for a music system. However those hooking the MCX-2000 into a home theater receiver would likely opt for either using the receiver's remote or a good universal one. I rarely used this remote as I quickly uploaded its code to my universal which incidentally is backlit. Hand me a remote without backlighting and it will quickly find its way into my storage bin (as this one did during a majority of my reviewing session).

Listening Tests: Music

A majority of my music listening was done via the MusicCAST digital outputs into my receiver which is the typical and usually preferred hookup method when mating the MCX-2000 with a home theater system. I spent more time than

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>
> Gene Della Sala

I care to admit listening to the archive of music I created. In fact, I found myself listening to stuff I ordinarily don't, not because it sounded fabulous on the MCX-2000 so much as it was there. If you are like me, you are probably all too familiar with the scenario of lacking motivation to load up your CD changer with discs you rarely listen too. When you have instant access to your entire music collection at your disposal, you find the motivation to broaden your listening palette. Such was my realization 2-3 hours after listening to my first song on the MCX-2000.

If you don't have Shakira in your music collection, you don't know what you are missing. It has nothing to do with the fact that she is absolutely gorgeous or that she is a superb dancer. Her musical content as far as Latin pop goes is top notch. It is obvious both from her lyrics and passion in her voice that she pours her heart into her music. My wife uploaded her entire Shakira music collection which I left intact as PCM to preserve its integrity. I thought I would do a quick spot check to ensure the transfer went well and found myself listening to nearly the entire Oral Fixation Volume 1 disc. Track #2 "La Pared" sounds killer in PLIIx Music Mode. This song certainly qualified on one of our favorites playlist. Track# 3 "La Tortura" and Track #8 "Las de la Intuicion" were more excellent examples of her high energy, thought provoking lyrics that get your foot stomping and head spinning (that is if you understand Spanish). I am still learning, and luckily my wife is a great translator. The MCX-2000 didn't miss a note here. The PCM transfer sounded every bit as good as the CD as I confirmed by switching back and forth between the two in real time using my Denon DVD-5900 to play the CD.

I recently acquired an old collection of progressive rock CDs from one of my brothers, most of which I loved growing up as a child, but simply wouldn't commit to purchasing them because of over familiarity with the music, and usually low fidelity associated with poor transfers to CD. Thus, I threw a half dozen of them into the MCX-2000 and let her rip. First up was Emerson Lake and Palmer's Love Beach.

Die hard fans will scold you for even mentioning this CD which in many ways represented their departure from the dying era of progressive rock to a more pop influenced decade known as the 80's. Despite the obvious feeble attempts of trying to sell out in a few of the tracks, some of the musical content on this CD in my opinion is still to this day, excellent. Thus I selectively copied the tracks worth listening too, such as the 20 minute song "Memoirs of an Officer and a Gentleman". I threw is some "Works Vol 1", "Pictures at an Exhibition", and "Brain Salad Surgery" and wham I had a rather diverse collection of some of the bands best music at my finger tips to enjoy and reminisce of the good ole days of progressive rock. The music sounded sterile in comparison to more modern recordings, but this was no fault of the MCX-2000 as it was a limitation of the recordings themselves.

Moving on to some high quality recordings, I fed the MCX-2000 my Fourplay, Pat Metheny, Uncle Festive, as well as the rest of my jazz collection of music. Again, I retained the PCM data for all of these recordings. John Scofield / Pat Metheny I Can See Your House From Here CD from BlueNote Records, is a close mic recording that portrays a very intimate feeling sonically. On a good system (and room for that matter), the speakers will literally disappear and you will be left with two legendary guitarists jamming away making some very cool lumpy jazz (free from the Jazzac found on the radio these days). Track #4 "Everybody's Party" is an upbeat swing kinda song with phenomenally great guitar solos from Scofield and Metheny along with some very dynamic drumming. The MCX-2000 handled it with ease sounding every bit as transparent as the original source disc when playing back the PCM.

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review

Useful Guidelines on CD Copying

As was the case with pretty much every Yamaha CD/DVD transport I have used in the past, the MCX-2000 was a bit finicky in playing back CDs that contained excessive scratches, dirt and blemishes. Perhaps one of the reasons I still have my 10 year old Sony ES changer on hand is I can literally run a knife over my CDs and they will still play on the Sony with no hiccups. This wasn't always the case with the MCX-2000 and I learned this lesson the hard way after I went to access some of the CDs I uploaded into the hard drive. I found two or three CDs that some of the tracks did not transfer well and you could hear distortion, high frequency crackling and skipping continuously throughout the particular tracks. In Yamaha's defense, not even my venerable Sony machine would play a couple of these blemished CDs. Thus I have listed some basic precautions when uploading music to your MCX-2000 to avoid later headaches and embarrassment when hosting a party and your Milli Vanilli music skips more than usual.

Pre-Recording Guidelines

- Make sure the surface of your CDs are clear of fingerprints, smudges and gunk.
- Spot check each track for playability of your CD on the MCX-2000 before recording it.
- Spot check playback of each recorded track of the uploaded CD to ensure it's free of clicks, pops, and other anomalies.

As you can see in the pic to the right, one of my favorite Steely Dan CDs didn't fair to well baking in my Slappa CD case in my car for the past two years. The gunk that can be seen on this CD is now literally engraved into the disc. I found about a half dozen or so of my CDs to suffer this ill fate. My advice is to burn copies of the CDs you want to listen to in your car. Don't store the originals in that heat (of course I live in Florida so it's a bit worse here.) In fact, you may even wish to create discs exclusively for the car which contain your favorite hits from each artist to avoid skipping tracks or thumbing through your entire Prince collection (or 'artist formerly known as Prince', or whatever he considers himself these days) to get your quick 1999 fix.

Suggestions for Improvement

Despite the almost limitless configurability of the MCX-2000, there were of course some shortcomings just as there are with virtually all home theater equipment in the eyes of the anal retentive Audioholic. Listed below are some of the issues I would like see improved upon or incorporated into future iterations or upgrades of this product.

- Ability to recognize and prevent double copying of CDs
- Integrated web browser or navigation tool to more easily find Internet music stations
- Bigger front panel display and less dependency on using the OSD

This is a rather short list and a tribute to Yamaha listening to the feedback from custom installers, and reviewers to continually improve product features and usability.

Conclusions

The Yamaha MusicCAST MCX-2000 is a dream come true to anyone looking for an easy to use, intelligent file management and server solution for their music database. Though more tech savvy enthusiasts may opt for building a HTPC solution to save a few bucks, they will still not likely be able to achieve the usability of the MCX-2000, not to mention its elegant slim line chassis and Yamaha brand name ensuring a great track record of reliability and quality. The MCX-2000 will be the hit at any of your social

gatherings or parties and although unobtrusive in appearance, will make itself known to your guests when they hear all of the great songs, interruption free, you selected for your playlists.

A Custom Installer can have a field day configuring and utilizing all of the great features of the MCX-2000. Because of its feature set, this will ensure a satisfied customer base and points with your clients once you empower them with the ability of streaming audio at the press of a button. This product truly redefines the way you listen to music and anyone previously unfamiliar with the power and flexibility of a music server, especially one that can stream music wirelessly, is really in for a treat.

My whole experience with this system has been one of delight. It brought me in touch with the music I grew up with and often forgotten widened my listening palette. Most importantly, it made me a superstar to my guests at a recent party we threw that went on until the early hours of the morning because of all of the dancing and non stop great music it served up. Now if only it could brew a pot of coffee…

By Gene Della Sala
Email - gds@audioholics.com

A Wife's Perspective

Who would have thought that the electronics industry, especially in this day-in-age, could make a product that was consumer friendly. I'm talking about the ease of use and facility of understanding the different capabilities the product has to offer. The best part, the instructions are even easy to read and understand.

You may ask, what is this little woman referring to? Well, I will tell you. I'll start by letting you know that this is currently my favorite toy. I used and abused it (not really, not yet) and I don't think I will ever get tired of mistreating it. Any ideas yet? No. That's Ok. It's no other than Yamaha's MusicCAST MCX-2000. This new baby is able to download and save hundreds of hours of quality CD recording (mp3 not included), as well as multi-server capabilities (Internet Radio, FM Radio, etc, etc, etc). The menus concocted by the engineers of this cleaver machine, are extremely easy to navigate through and decipher. No more need to have the "guys" tell you and run it for you (although, it is nice to feel serviced), which let's us show them that we can do it too. But, it does feel great to have the ability to work this toy on your own. I have to tell you ladies, this is an easy, likable, compact and wonderful product to use. The best part, most of the music in it will be yours and yours alone.

By Tica Molinares-DellaSala

Yamaha MusicCAST MCX-2000 Score Card

The scoring below is based on each piece of equipment doing the duty it is designed for. The numbers are weighed heavily with respect to the individual cost of each unit, thus giving a rating equal to: **Performance x Price Factor/Value = Rating**

Audioholics Ratings Scale:

⬥⬥⬥⬥⬥ Outstanding (reserved for features or areas that exceed market norms)

⬥⬥⬥⬥ Above Average

⬥⬥⬥ Average

⬥⬥ Below average

⬥ Very poor

METRIC	RATING
Build Quality	⬥⬥⬥⬥ ½
Ease of Setup	⬥⬥⬥⬥ ½
User Interface	⬥⬥⬥⬥ ½
Remote	⬥⬥⬥ ½
Appearance	⬥⬥⬥⬥
Features	⬥⬥⬥⬥⬥
Sound Quality	⬥⬥⬥⬥⬥
Overall	⬥⬥⬥⬥ ½
Value	⬥⬥⬥⬥

About Yamaha Electronics

Yamaha Electronics Corporation (YEC), USA, based in Buena Park, California, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Yamaha. YEC offers Home Theater components and systems, featuring A/V Receivers, Amplifiers, DVD/CD, Speakers, Mini-Systems, Video Projection, as well as A/V & IT Convergence Products.

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